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THE

# INTERIM

A REPORT OF INTERIM ACTIVITY . . . MONTANA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL . . . HELENA

MARCH 1986

VOL. V, NO. 10

## JOINT INTERIM SUBCOMMITTEE ON VO-TECH EDUCATION/ JOB TRAINING

FEBRUARY 14  
MEETING

The Joint Interim Subcommittee on Vo-Techs/Job Training met Friday, February 14, at the Capitol. The morning agenda was devoted to a work session for Subcommittee members to discuss a list of vo-tech issues and options prepared by staff. The main issues covered included: whether to change vo-tech governance to a more centralized system; what type of new structure might best serve the state and the vo-techs; whether all postsecondary vocational education should be under one state level board; and whether all districts with vo-techs should be mandated to join a new system. The Subcommittee discussed a number of options under each main issue and voted to narrow the range of options that would be further explored. The various issues surrounding funding will be discussed at the next meeting.

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ATTORNEY'S  
OPINION  
HEARD

During its afternoon session, the Subcommittee heard a report by its staff attorney, Mary McCue. Ms. McCue analyzed the key provisions of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and told the Subcommittee that the Legislature has only an advisory role in administering the Act.

AUDITOR'S  
REPORT ON  
JOB TRAINING  
SURVEY

The Legislative Auditor's staff presented a report on its survey of job training participants, conducted late in 1985. People who had participated in training programs under JTPA between July 1984 and September 1985 were compared with a "control group" of people who had registered with Job Service during the same period. By December 1985, only half of the training participants -- compared

with over three-quarters of the nonparticipants -- had found a job. Of the participants who had completed training and found a job, only 38% said that they had received a job for which they had been trained.

The Subcommittee plans to meet next in April.

RESEARCHER  
ATTENDS  
CONFERENCE

The staff researcher attended an SRS-sponsored conference on work programs for welfare recipients on February 24-25, in Helena. Featured speakers included the head of the Family Assistance Division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; three employment specialists from other states (Iowa, Nebraska, and Maryland); several local officials; and Representative Cal Winslow (R-Billings).

The visiting specialists described successful employment programs in their own states, emphasizing the importance of making the client responsible for his own job search, with coaching and moral support from agencies and other job seekers.

Gary Curtis, administrator of the Montana Job Service and Training Division, presented a report on a recent Job Service study of 632 able-bodied General Assistance recipients in four counties (Silver Bow, Cascade, Missoula, and Lewis and Clark). The results of this study suggest that approximately half the people classified by SRS as able-bodied are not immediately employable for a variety of reasons including lack of transportation, lack of suitable skills, lack of recent work history, and health problems.

Representative Winslow presented a two-part plan for relieving the state of part of the financial burden of supporting unemployed persons. He plans to ask the Legislature during the special session to enact a law requiring all general assistance recipients to enroll in the Job Service's "World of Work" program and to refer to the voters a constitutional amendment enabling the Legislature to limit eligibility for general assistance.

JOINT INTERIM SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL  
PROBLEMS

GREAT FALLS  
MEETINGS HELD

The Joint Interim Subcommittee on Agricultural Problems met in Great Falls on February 20-21.

SYMPOSIUM ATTENDED	On February 20 the Subcommittee participated in an Agricultural Research Symposium sponsored by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.
PUBLIC HEARING	In addition, at an evening meeting at the Great Falls Civic Center, the Subcommittee heard testimony from concerned citizens and organizations regarding the economic problems of agriculture. The testimony included requests by several political action organizations that the Subcommittee consider legislation to establish a limited moratorium on farm foreclosures. The Subcommittee took no action on the proposed foreclosure moratorium.
STUDY ISSUES EXPLORED	On February 21 the Subcommittee held hearings related to its study of agricultural research priorities, wildlife damage, and problems in the quality of Montana grain produced for export.
SPECIAL SESSION ISSUES	<p>During the February 21 meeting, the Subcommittee unanimously approved a motion to request that the Governor include in his call for a special session consideration of legislation to address the serious economic problems of agriculture in Montana. As part of this request, the Subcommittee recommended that the Legislature address the problems of agriculture through consideration of the following legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- A bill to provide for a state-linked deposit program, whereby the state may use revenues from the short-term investment pool to purchase low-yielding certificates of deposit in participating banks, who will then be required to make agricultural loans to borrowers at favorable interest rates. (Proposal adopted unanimously.)</li> <li>-- A bill to create a program to provide: (1) financial and management counseling; (2) mental health assistance; and (3) voluntary debt mediation for financially distressed farmers and ranchers. (Proposal adopted by majority vote, 5 - 3.)</li> <li>-- A resolution to urge the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to make advance CCC loan payments available to Montana farmers, as authorized under provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill, thereby by making money available for the 1986 planting season. (Proposal adopted unanimously.)</li> </ul>

-- A resolution asking the U.S. Congress not to propose or approve any additional tax on imported oil because of the impact upon Montana agricultural producers, which is expected to result in higher production costs at a time of financial stress in agriculture. (Proposal adopted 7 - 0, with one abstention.)

KALISPELL  
MEETING

The Subcommittee is scheduled to meet in Kalispell in May.

JOINT INTERIM SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIEN LAWS

MYRIAD LIEN  
ISSUES  
REVIEWED

During its meeting on February 7, the Joint Interim Subcommittee on Lien Laws reviewed its recommendations on changes in exemptions from execution and on mechanics' liens and heard comments from interested persons. The Subcommittee decided to meet during the special session to make final recommendations on these subjects.

Also heard by the Subcommittee were requests for lien privileges by land surveyors and physical therapists, a report on a recent order in federal Bankruptcy Court on exemption of retirement benefits, and a report on the recently enacted federal farm products lien legislation.

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

UPCOMING  
MEETING

The Legislative Audit Committee will meet during the upcoming special session on Tuesday evening, March 25, at 7 p.m. The location of the meeting will be announced.

Financial-compliance audits scheduled to be presented include:

- Department of Livestock
- Montana State Prison, Department of Institutions
- Board of Pardons, Department of Institutions
- Audit of Federal Emergency Management Agency Grant, 1983 Flood at Boulder River School and Hospital

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

MARCH 21  
MEETING

The Legislative Council will meet Friday, March 21, at 10 a.m. in Room 132. The agenda includes a presentation by a representative of the printing

company that printed the Montana Code explaining why Code delivery was a month later than provided by contract.

#### LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

##### MARCH 5 GENERAL FUND REVIEW

The Legislative Finance Committee will meet to review 1987 biennium general fund revenue and fund balance projections. This meeting will be in the old Supreme Court Chambers in the state Capitol at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, March 5.

#### LEGISLATIVE AGENCY DIRECTORS

##### REGULAR MEETINGS SET

The directors of the five legislative agencies have begun regular meetings on the first Thursday of each month. The purpose of the meetings is to encourage interagency staff cooperation and exchange of information. The directors hope that their meetings will lead to increased communication and awareness between the legislative staffs and prevent overlap or duplication of staff assignments. The directors will meet March 6 to discuss preparation for the special session and to discuss library resources and records management with the Legislative Council's research librarian.

#### REVENUE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

##### SEVENTH MEETING MARCH 21

The Revenue Oversight Committee held its sixth meeting of the interim on February 21. The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for March 21 in Helena.

##### LIQUOR STORE CLOSURE

The Department of Revenue's proposal to close ten liquor stores aroused considerable interest among Committee members, other legislators, and the owners of the liquor stores. After over two hours of testimony opposing the closure of the stores, the Committee voted unanimously to request the Department to postpone closing any stores until the 1987 Legislature has a chance to review the plan.

The Department has the authority to implement the closures despite the recommendation of the Committee.

##### BN TAXES

In other discussion, the Committee was presented with further information on Burlington Northern's property taxes. Teresa O. Cohea, representing the Governor, informed the Committee that the issue of

the tax rate applicable to BN's operating property would be included in the call for the special session. As of February 21, the Governor was considering a request to limit the taxable rate applicable to BN's property at about 12%. (The formula adopted in HB 240 would establish the rate at about 14% for 1986 with an expected decrease each year until the next property reappraisal, scheduled for 1991.

TAX SALE LAWS      The Committee also heard a staff report on the sale of property for delinquent taxes. Representatives of Montana's county treasurers and county clerks and recorders gave testimony that Montana's statutes governing property tax delinquencies are antiquated, inefficient, ambiguous, and in great need of change. The Committee will be considering options for amending the process at future meetings.

NEW  
INDUSTRIAL  
LAW REVISION      The Department of Revenue's granting "new industrial" status to the property owned by Montana Resources, Inc., (sometimes referred to as the Washington Construction Corporation), also came under the Committee's scrutiny. Review of the new industrial classification by the Committee's staff resulted in a request by the Committee for options, including draft legislation, to amend the statutes governing new industrial property. Those drafts will probably be completed for the March 21 meeting.

The March 21 meeting is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. in Room 104 of the Capitol in Helena. Questions relating to the meeting or the Committee can be directed to Dave Bohyer at the Legislative Council.

#### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

ALCOHOL/DRUG  
PROBLEMS  
REVIEWED      The Committee on Indian Affairs met in Helena on January 31, to examine the issue of alcoholism and Native Americans. The meeting began with some general observations from tribal leaders on the nature and extent of alcoholism among Indian people. Terry Bear Tusk, Director of the Thunder Child Treatment Center in Sheridan, Wyoming, discussed culturally specific alcoholism treatment methods. Committee members also heard a progress report on plans to open an Indian adolescent chemical dependency program in the Valley Industrial Park. In addition, information on federal



and state funding for Indian alcoholism treatment programs was presented. Several Indian alcoholism program directors also discussed their programs with the Committee.

INDIAN CHILD  
WELFARE  
NEXT ISSUE

Committee members agreed to contact alcoholic beverage producers to determine if any grant money is available for Indian alcoholism treatment programs. The Committee also decided to focus on the Indian Child Welfare Act at its next meeting.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH INSURANCE FOR RETIRED  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

FEBRUARY 28  
MEETING HELD

The Select Committee on Health Insurance for Retired Public Employees met Friday, February 28. During this meeting, staff reported to the Committee on a number of topics including the results of the Committee's retiree health insurance survey; local government group health insurance plans; retiree health insurance in the private sector; legal issues concerning post-retirement health care benefits; and retiree health insurance options.

Following staff reports, the Committee heard testimony from interested persons and groups on proposals for meeting the health insurance needs of retired public employees.

MONTANA-WESTERN CANADIAN PROVINCES BOUNDARY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE  
MEETS WITH  
ALBERTANS

A delegation of Alberta officials headed by the Honorable James Horsman, Q.C., Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and including several other cabinet ministers and members of the Legislature, met with the Montana-Western Canadian Provinces Boundary Advisory Committee on February 21. Several officials from Saskatchewan also participated. Lt. Governor George Turman presided in the Governor's Reception Room.

Topics discussed included free trade, Canadian energy policy, proposals to develop additional water for irrigation in the Milk River Valley, electrical generation in southern Saskatchewan, agricultural problems, and tourism promotion in association with the 1988 Winter Olympics at Calgary.

The next meeting will be in Alberta on a date yet to be chosen.

\*all meetings are subject to change

# LEGISLATIVE INTERIM CALENDAR

MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 RETIREE HEALTH INS. Rm. 104
2	3	4	5 LEG. FINANCE COMM. - 2pm	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 REV. OVERSIGHT COMM. - Rm. 104 LEG. COUNCIL Rm. 132-10am	22
23	24 SPECIAL SESSION	25 LEG. AUDIT COMM. - 7pm	26	27	28	29
30 EASTER	31					

## LEGISLATIVE INTERIM CALENDAR

APRIL

SATURDAY

FRIDAY

THURSDAY

WEDNESDAY

TUESDAY

MONDAY

SUNDAY

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 INFRASTRUC- TURE COMM. Rm. 104-10am	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

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